



# Tulare County Parks Advisory Committee

**Committee  
Members**  
Mike Chrisman  
Carol Finney  
Karol Aure-Flynn  
Aaron Gomes  
Nancy Hawkins  
Neil Pilegard  
Courtney Roche,  
Jr.

## MINUTES

January 26, 2016

03:00 P.M. Committee Convenes

### NOTICE TO THE PUBLIC PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD

At this time, members of the public may comment on any item not appearing on the agenda. Under state law, matters presented under this item cannot be discussed or acted upon by the Board at this time. For items appearing on the agenda, the public is invited to make comments at the time the item comes up for Board consideration. Any person addressing the Board will be limited to a maximum of three (3) minutes so that all interested parties have an opportunity to speak. At all times, please use the microphone and state your name and address for the record.

Present Members: Mike Chrisman, Carol Finney, Nancy Hawkins, Neil Pileard, Courtney Roche Jr.

Absent Members: Aaron Gomes, Karol Aure-Flynn

Staff Present: John Hess, Amy King

1. **Call to Order:** Chairman Chrisman called the meeting to order at 3:02
2. **Welcome:** Chairman Chrisman welcomed everyone to the meeting. He announced that Aaron Gomes has resigned. John Hess stated that the resignation letter is on file and will notice vacancy. There will be a ten day notice period and the position vacancy will be advertised. The Board of Supervisors (BOS) will then collect the applications and review them to select a new candidate. This process will take approximately a month to fill the vacancy. Chairman Chrisman

asked to be reminded of the district that Aaron Gomes was appointed by and John Hess replied that it was District 4, Supervisor Worthley's district.

**3. Approval of Minutes from December 8, 2015:** Chairman Chrisman stated that the minutes are extensive and asked for any corrections or additions. Committee member Hawkins motioned to approve the minutes, Committee member Pilegard seconded the motion.

**4. Public Comment:** None at this time.

**5. Visalia Feral Cat Coalition Trap, Neuter, and Release:** John Hess summarized previous accounts of this item. At the November 10, 2015 Parks Advisory Committee meeting, the Visalia Feral Cat Coalition (VFCC) made a presentation regarding the TNR program. In essence, the TNR program is promoted by classifying it as a humane and cost effective way of reducing a cat population. During the December 8, 2015 Parks Advisory Committee meeting, the committee heard from park staff, Tulare County Animal Services, and the California Department of Fish and Wildlife on their experiences with the TNR program such as successes and failures and other data associated with the program. The VFCC was in attendance and able to provide responses to these presentations. Staff worked with the VFCC to outline parameters, details and logistical terms that would need to be included if the County were to proceed with a TNR program. County staff did research on other TNR programs so that going forward parameters can be implemented to potentially contribute to the program at Mooney Grove Park being successful. The County Administrative Officer and John Hess met with the VFCC yesterday to discuss exactly that matter. The County Administrative Officer does support for moving forward with negotiations for a type of TNR program. County will outline parameters and the VFCC is putting together an outline with best business practices for their proposed program.

Chairman Chrisman asked why the VFCC and the County don't put together one proposal. John Hess described that both sides need to make their needs and expectations clear going forward. The VFCC will put together their best practices that can feasibly be implemented at this site. The County will set the parameters that are necessary to protect the County. The intent from both sides is to reduce the cat population at Mooney Grove Park. John Hess stated that it is not necessary for the matter to be readdressed by the Committee. The finalizing of parameters can be done between the County and the VFCC then bring the finished product to the committee to present to the BOS. Chairman Chrisman would like the issue to be brought back to the Committee and then the Committee will present to the BOS. John Hess stated that over the next week or two the County will work with the VFCC to get a proposal together for the Committee to review at the next meeting.

Committee member Hawkins asked for clarification regarding how they will move forward in this process. As she sees it, the County and the VFCC will both make a list of what they want and can do and then mesh those two together.

John Hess stated that the VFCC put together a proposal that identified their objectives. There are specifics that need to be identified such as where the feeding will take place, who will be doing the feeding, how will the feeders be identified, and when and how often will the feeding take place. The VFCC will provide this information as they see fit.

Karen Kent the Vice President of the VFCC stated that they had a productive meeting yesterday. They are putting together a maintenance plan for going forward. Very basic steps of what the program will look like. They are comfortable with that and can do that in two weeks. Insurance issues were discussed at the meeting. The VFCC will prepare a "how to" document for the county to move forward.

Chairman Chrisman asked for further comments from the audience and then stated that he thinks they should present to the BOS a consensus from everyone. He would like to take vote on this at the next meeting.

Committee member Hawkins said she would feel more comfortable looking at the agreed upon proposal before going to the BOS with the committee's recommendation. Chairman Chrisman agreed.

It will be taken to the BOS on March 15 meeting as agreed upon by the VFCC and County from the meeting yesterday.

Committee member Hawkins asked if they will still be taking care of the cats between now and then.

Karen Kent stated that they are still feeding the cats and that they are now picking up the trash left behind from feeding. John Hess stated that it is part of the collaboration to have the VFCC be part of enforcing the parameters that both parties agree upon.

#### **6. Update on Proposed Health Advisory Committee Smoking Ban in County Parks:**

Committee member Pilegard stated that the Parks Advisory Committee voted on following the City of Visalia model. Chairman Chrisman asked Committee member Pilegard to remind everyone what that model is. Committee member Pilegard explained that rather than having hard and fast rules, they put up signs around the playgrounds and other high traffic areas requesting that it be a no smoking area.

Committee member Pilegard presented the decision at the Health Advisory Committee meeting and will move forward on a trial basis. A HHSA staff will be coming by before and after signs are put up in the parks to evaluate the efficiency of the program. He said that this will be started in March when the parks start charging so they will have a car count to help with retrieving data. There will be a year-long evaluation March, June and the following March.

Chairman Chrisman reminded everyone that this will be a self-policing effort, not people walking around with citation books. He asked what the evaluation will be like. Committee member Pilegard will meet with HHSA staff to see how they will evaluate the program. Chairman Chrisman suggested going to other communities to see how they evaluate their programs successfully. Committee member Pilegard spoke with the city of Visalia and the city of Tulare and visual observations have been done rather than statistical evaluation and they saw that smokers moved away from the signs posted.

**7. Park Well Status Report:** Committee member Pilegard said that he is working with Southern California Edison to indicate where they will connect to. The new wells that have been drilled at



Mooney Grove Park do not have sufficient power to them to operate 100 horsepower for the irrigation well and 30 horsepower for the domestic well. The 480 line that was buried got hit during the drilling of a well because it was not marked by USA. Southern California Edison has to replace that line by putting in a new line from a different transformer that is near the caboose on the museum grounds. There is a \$20,000 switch gear that needs to be installed that the County is responsible for funding. It will be beneficial to the County and will supply a better power source to the park. They are still working out details on where and how to get lines taken care of and should be done in a matter of weeks not months.

Committee member Pilegard stated that the Cutler Park well may need a developing pump on the existing well. The irrigation well is dry and the domestic pump is ok. Committee member Pilegard is looking into what they have working and how they can use that to make it more of a priority. He stated that the well at Mooney took six months to get drilled on an emergency status, and he does not want to go all summer without a well at Cutler Park.

Chairman Chrisman said that a driller needs to be lined up and immediately get on a waiting list at least and it can always be canceled.

John Hess said that since the time that the County declared a state of emergency with several wells in the County, the Governor passed new law with requirements that will be more conducive to quickly getting through the processes necessary to drill new emergency wells.

Catherine Doe asked about the domestic well at Cutler Park.

Committee member Pilegard said the irrigation well is dry and the domestic well is currently running.

**8. Mooney Grove 20 Year Conceptual Master Plan:** Chairman Chrisman stated that after the meeting the committee will be taking a walking tour around the park to take a look at the issues that have been addressed such as the wells, pond, geese, etc. and everyone is welcome to join the tour.

John Hess stated that until the committee has a better handle on the deferred maintenance issues that have been brought up, there are no new issues that will be addressed. Perhaps in a few months there will be some new projects to look at regarding the master plan.

**9. Park Manager Update:** Committee member Pilegard distributed a document to the committee with updates on three County parks. This is entered as Exhibit A. He wanted to break up the park update in to three parts over several meetings so that the scope is not overwhelming.

Committee member Pilegard indicated that there is no real infrastructure at Kings River Park. There was one arbor there that needs to be replaced due to fire damage. The estimate is for \$72,000, and insurance will cover \$10,000 deductible.

Chairman Chrisman asked how big the arbor was. Committee member Pilegard explained that it was about the equivalent size of arbor 1 or 2 at Mooney Grove Park on the north side of the pond.

Committee member Hawkins asked how the fire at Kings River Park started. Committee member Pilegard said that someone was playing with a flare gun that started a fire and burned the corner of the park.

Committee member Pilegard stated that the domestic distribution system and electrical system at Ledbetter Park, on the north side of Cutler, were put in in the seventies. The irrigation system has already been slated to be replaced for the end of June this year using some housing related parks program funds. An arbor restoration and playground enlargement will also be part of the project that the housing project funds will be allocated to.

John Hess added that the housing program is a state grant that gives money to low income communities. The utilization of this program is being limited to parks. The more permits that the County gets the more money the County can get.

Chairman Chrisman would like to know where the funding comes from for that project. He was wondering if they are bond dollars. John Hess was unsure of where the funding comes from and will find out where that funding is provided from.

Committee member Pilegard said that the program utilizes the number of acres of park per 1000 people and the income of the people in the area. The only county park that qualifies based on that criteria is Ledbetter Park.

Chairman Chrisman asked if electrical lines are overhead or buried and do we know where the lines are.

Committee member Pilegard said they are buried and is not sure where they are.

Committee member Hawkins asked if they are working on replacing the electrical system this year.

Chairman Chrisman asked if they could do it incrementally.

Committee member Pilegard said it is expensive, but they probably can work on it incrementally at Mooney Grove Park. To give perspective, Bartlett Park is about 127 acres and 70 developed acres and it cost about \$600,000 to redo the power there. Since Mooney Grove Park is larger and has more amenities, it might be a million and a half to two million dollars.

Chairman Chrisman asked if the electrical is in conduit.

Committee member Pilegard said that some is in conduit and quite a bit is direct bury.

Committee member Hawkins asked if any of it was scheduled to start work and also about possibly spending money from the BOS on that. Committee member Pilegard said that allocation of the funds have not been discussed regarding using the money for this project.

Chairman Chrisman asked what the process is to decide on spending the money.

Pilegard said that he is looking at the highest need with infrastructure. A major concern are the wells that are needed at Cutler Park, Mooney Grove Park and possibly Balch Park. Some of the funds might need to go to the irrigation system at Ledbetter Park.

John Hess said 200 million dollars went to California's Housing Related Parks Program by the sale of bonds authorized by the Housing and Emergency Shelter Trust Fund Act of 2006.

Committee member Hawkins asked if the amount of money given to the parks on a one time basis was one million dollars. Committee member Pilegard confirmed it was a million dollars and will go quickly.

Chairman Chrisman asked how Committee member Pilegard does a quantitative needs assessment. Is it a deliberative process?

Committee member Pilegard said that they evaluate projects that can be accomplished in house versus not having the ability to do the work in house. They can do projects for about a quarter of the cost if they have staff that can do projects. Money should be used on projects that the staff cannot do. Also, they look at what portion of projects can they do realistically. Where do they run into the largest number of problems? There are many more projects than they can fund, priorities are based on high traffic/usage and biggest need.

Chairman Chrisman stated that sewer and water issues are highest priority and most expensive.

Committee member Pilegard said that bathrooms have been a complaint since he started with the County, due to the capacity of fixtures/infrastructure, not because staff was not doing their job. The parks used Proposition 12 money to renovate bathrooms and those complaints have stopped. He received his first complaint regarding a bathroom in over a year at the beginning of the month. Higher use of restrooms means that toilets need to be updated. He wants to provide the best experience for park visitors.

Committee member Roche asked if domestic water is something that can be done in house by staff

Chairman Chrisman asked if that is a possibility due to contracts.

Committee member Pilegard said yes, it is a possibility. It is a function of scheduling and getting the right equipment where it is needed.

Committee member Pilegard said that they have spent a lot of time on Mooney Grove Park addressing issues but can work on water next.

Chairman Chrisman said that building and maintenance is the largest part of the budget. Things can cost a lot more for work because it is hard to keep up with the work.

Committee member Pilegard said that they are dealing with expected lifespan problems, which is understandable.

**10. Committee Matters & Next Meeting Date:** The next meeting date is set for February 24, 2016 at 3:00 p.m. at Cutler Park 15520 Ivanhoe Drive Visalia, CA.

**11. Adjournment:** The meeting was adjourned at 3:50 p.m.



## Exhibit A

## **Park Advisory Committee Park Report**

*The second of a three part series*

### **Kings River Park**

- Domestic water none.
- Irrigation system none.
- Electrical system none.
- It had an arbor that was burned down and it is recommended it be replaced by insurance. The estimated replacement cost is \$72,000 and the cost to the County would be the \$10,000 deductible.

### **Ledbetter Park**

- Domestic water distribution system was installed with PVC pipe in the 1970's the distribution system is recommended to be replaced utilizing the proposed 2016 Housing-Related Parks (HRP) Program funds.
- Irrigation system was installed in the 1970's and is planned to be replaced before the end of June 2016 utilizing awarded HRP funds.
- Electrical system was installed in the 1970's and is recommended to be replaced utilizing the proposed 2016 HRP funds.
- Additional arbor renovation and playground enlargement are also recommended utilizing the proposed 2016 HRP funds.

### **Mooney Grove Park**

- Domestic water distribution system was installed with galvanized pipe in the 1950's it is in need of replacement. We are experiencing a break every other month.
- Irrigation system was installed in the 2007. The expected life span is 20 years. It is working well with normal maintenance.
- Electrical system was installed in the 1950's. It is in questionable condition and should be scheduled for replacement.